

## FATHERHOOD MAKES A DIFFERENCE: Stay Involved

Establishing legal fatherhood for unmarried parents is important so that your child can enjoy the same rights and privileges available to all children.

It is easy to establish legal fatherhood and it can make a big difference in your child's emotional and financial future.

### BENEFITS OF ESTABLISHING PATERNITY

**Health:** Your child needs to know if he or she has inherited any health problems. This question can be answered only if the medical history of both parents is available. Also, it is often possible to obtain health insurance for the child through the father's employer, union or military service.

**Financial Benefits:** Your child has the right to benefits from both parents. These could include Social Security benefits, inheritance rights, Native corporation dividends, veterans benefits and other types of assistance. Unless you have legally established paternity, your child may not be able to claim these benefits.

**Security:** The uncertainty of not knowing their father can make growing up even harder for many children.

**Support:** Both parents are required by law to support their child.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Children with involved, caring fathers have better educational outcomes.

### ESTABLISHING FATHERHOOD IS EASY

In order to ensure that all children receive the same rights and privileges, paternity should be established for children whose mothers were not married during pregnancy or at the time of their child's conception or birth.

The father may establish paternity simply by signing an affidavit at the child's birth, acknowledging he is the father of the child. Forms for the mother and father to sign are available at hospitals and birthing centers, and

signing the form at the child's birth means the father's name will be on the birth certificate. This guarantees the child will receive all the benefits of legal paternity.

If the mother was married when the baby was conceived or born, or during pregnancy, state law says her husband is the baby's legal father. If the husband is not the father, he must take legal action if he wants to revoke the paternity. This can be done through the courts or child support agency, or by signing a three-party affidavit with the mother, her husband and the biological father.

### PATERNITY CAN BE ESTABLISHED AFTER BIRTH

You can establish paternity at any time in your child's life. Paternity acknowledgement forms are available from the Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics or the Alaska Child Support Services Division. (CSSD)

**Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics**  
**PO Box 110675**  
**Juneau, AK 99811-0675**  
**(907) 465-3392**

Your child will benefit from all the rights and privileges available to other children, regardless of when the father establishes paternity.

If the father declines to acknowledge paternity, the courts or the CSSD can take steps to determine paternity. The mother or legal guardian also can request the service. If the mother or legal guardian applies for public assistance, we will attempt to establish paternity as required by law.

Genetic testing will be used to help determine paternity. CSSD or the courts will schedule the mother, the child and the likely father for an appointment to collect a DNA sample using a swab, similar to a Q-Tip. A CSSD caseworker will use the swab to pick up cells inside the mouth.

If the testing is part of a child support paternity establishment, the father must pay the cost. If testing shows the man is not the father, the state will pay the cost.

We can establish paternity if the father is in another state, but it may take more time. Every state has an agreement that covers establishing paternity and collecting child support from parents in other states.

### WHO CAN ASK TO DETERMINE PATERNITY?

The child's father, mother or legal custodian can apply to CSSD for establishment of paternity and a support order for a child born out of wedlock.

If the mother is not sure of the father's identity, CSSD can help determine what action is necessary to establish paternity.

An alleged father cannot ask to determine paternity for a child when there is a legal husband listed as the father on the child's birth certificate. In these instances, the alleged father will need to motion the court to determine paternity.

### The Numbers

According to 2011 U.S. Census Bureau data, over 24 million children live apart from their biological fathers. That is 1 out of every 3 (33%) children in America. Nearly 2 in 3 (64%) African American children live in father-absent homes. One in three (34%) Hispanic children, and 1 in 4 (25%) white children live in father-absent homes.

In 1960, only 11% of children lived in father-absent homes. The rate has tripled since then.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Although men are most frequently the providers of child support, 15 percent of all people who pay child support are women.

### The Consequences

Children who live absent their biological fathers are, on average, at least two to three times more than their peers who live with their married, biological (or adoptive) parents to:

Be **poor** • Use **drugs** • Experience **educational problems** • Experience **health problems** • Experience **emotional problems** • Experience **behavioral problems** • Become **victims** of child abuse • Engage in **criminal behavior**

See more at: <http://www.fatherhood.org/>

## CSSD Checklist:

- **Always read and respond** to mail from CSSD.
- **Provide complete information** for faster processing and accurate orders.
- **Maintain contact.** Your caseworker can give you updates on actions taken on your case.
- **Keep good records** of your dealings with CSSD. Keep copies of your paystubs and tax records.
- **Notify CSSD of any changes** to your address, new job, income, child support order, custody order by the court, or when a child turns 18.
- **Check our website** for more information, forms, and answers to questions.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Child support and visitation rights are two distinct and different legal matters. (You can't legally stop paying child support just because the other parent makes it hard for you or even prevents you from seeing your child.)

## Let us introduce ourselves!

We are the Alaska Child Support Services Division (CSSD) and are responsible for establishing and enforcing child support orders to make sure Alaska's children receive financial support from both parents.

### We offer the following services:

- **Locate parents**
- **Establish paternity**
- **Establish child support orders**
- **Enforce child support orders**
- **Review and modify child support orders**
- **Direct deposit of your child support payments**

### Payment Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 100380  
Anchorage, AK 99510-0380

### Mailing Address:

550 W 7th Ave, Suite 310  
Anchorage, AK 99501-6699

### Contact us:

Customer Service: (907) 269-6900  
TOLL FREE (In-state) 800-478-3300  
TOLL FREE (In-state) 800-370-6894  
FAX (907) 787-3220



CSSD 04-6202 Rev. 10/20

## The Gift of Fatherhood:

# Establishing Paternity



## Alaska Child Support Services Division (CSSD)

### Appointment Schedule:

Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 3:30 pm

### Call Center:

Monday – Thursday: 9:30 am – 4:00 pm

FOR MORE INFORMATION CHECK OUR  
WEBPAGE:  
<http://www.childsupport.alaska.gov>

